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Location: To be announced
For reservations: 528-4972

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March 8, 2012

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Wednesday, February 15, 2012

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Funeral for Houston Saturday at hometown church

NEW YORK (AFP) - A private funeral service for Whitney Houston will be held Saturday at the Newark, New Jersey church where the pop diva sang in a gospel choir as a child, the funeral home told AFP yesterday.

"The service will be held Saturday 12 noon at New Hope Baptist Church," said an employee at the Whigham Funeral Home in Newark, which was making preparations for Houston to be laid to rest.

There were conflicting reports about a public memorial with CBS television saying that a two-day event would be held at Newark's Prudential Center sports arena, but NBC News saying the plans had been scrapped.

Houston was found dead on Saturday, at the age of 48, in her bathtub in a luxury suite of the Beverly Hilton hotel as preparations were



under way for the Grammy Awards, the highlight of the music industry calendar.

The autopsy was completed on Sunday but the results have been held back pending the completion of a toxicology probe.

Meanwhile Houston's songs were rocketing up the pop charts yesterday, in some cases a quarter-century after their initial release, as fans sought to recapture the magic of the diva's iconic voice in the wake of her death.

It is Carnival time with the SVGA!



Rubia Maduro, "was to see our members more involved with volunteer work for Aruba's mentally challenged."

WCA member Carmen Russell took on the job as project manager, contacting Elvira Tromp, Director of Man na Obra Center, which re-

sulted in the WCA sponsoring the Climax band to perform during the party, fantastic carnival paraphernalia for all those attending, and age-appropriate gifts for all the SVGA "clients," in honor of the day.

Continued on page 2

Every year, just before the final Carnival Parade, Meta Corp, owners of the Renaissance Resort & Convention Center, host a special carnival party for Aruba's special people, the clients of the Stichting Voor Verstandelijk Gehandicapt en SVGA, the Foundation for the Mentally Challenged.

This year, The Women's Club of Aruba also sponsored and participated in the event which took place yesterday morning; "One of my stated goals when I was installed," explained WCA President



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It is Carnival time with the SVGA!



Renaissance provided their usual delectable lunch buffet, and hosted over 200 of those registered with the SVGA and 100 staff and volunteers who work with them. They even had

their own carnival queens, A Prins Traha and Pancho Solo, and were fully in the sway of the carnival spirit, reveling on the dance floor the entire morning. SVGA Director Arturo Werleman and Head of Volunteers Netty Williams expressed their enormous gratitude to both Renaissance, Meta Corp and the Women's Club for their gracious generosity in providing this very special event for all involved with the SVGA; it was made even more special as it was also Valentine's Day, and veteran caregiver Grace Zara celebrated her 30th anniversary of working with the foundation that same day.

by Rosalie Klein

PALMARUBA may be just what you are looking for...



PalmAruba Managing Director Victor Acosta

"Sometimes I felt just like Goldilocks and The Three Bears," confided an island visitor of their search for the perfect condominium property on Aruba. "We found one property was either too big or another too small; we were really looking for something in the right area that gave us a sense of community, but had a bit more of a resort feel we like -we are still looking."

Perhaps this couple, and many like them, seeking that ideal condominium facility should stop by the offices of PALMARUBA to learn about the exciting new project that is like Momma Bear- a comfortable fit that is "just right."

The project is the dream of veteran real estate developer Victor Acosta, well known to owners at Palma Real, Oceania, and Montana Plaza, all very popular projects that saw successful completion. Victor has done both big and small, and it has long been his dream to create small to mid-size project he noticed many potential clients were seeking; from his experience he also has noticed such a complex would be much more efficient to run.

PALMARUBA has a superior location in the heart of Palm Beach, with sufficient distance

to create a tranquil oasis away from the hustle and bustle of the main strip, but close enough to all the action that a pleasant stroll allows residents to avail themselves of all the casinos and amenities and of course, Aruba's best beaches. When completed, PALMARUBA will provide shuttle service to the beach (and airport) for its owners and their guests, several times a day.

Actually, all amenities of PALMARUBA, the pool, Jacuzzi, fitness room, restaurant, tennis court, game room, concierge services and 24/7 security will all come online along with the opening of the facility, as it is Victor's intention to only open when everything is ready. "I have

anyone who is living here needs in the way of shopping and services, less than 5 minutes walk away."

During the planning, rising energy costs were kept in mind, and the PalmAruba complex will make as much use of renewable energy technology as possible, thus reducing utility costs for their condo owners.

The spacious, affordable units range from a 1 bedroom/bath of 76 sq meters to luxurious 3 bed/bath penthouses of 224 sq meters. For those that are seeking something truly unique, check out the "Sugar Palm" design with an extra bed and bath in a duplex loft. The project will boast 5 floors, offering spectacular views of the sea and shore from the upper level terraces. Other vital services, such as



seen those who bought in first to various projects have to suffer with the noise and inconvenience of constant construction," explains Victor of his plan, "and I do not want that for our clients. Because we will only offer 76 units we will complete the entire project by the end of 2014 and present it to our owners as a fait accompli, so they may fully enjoy the promised rest and relaxation that was why they purchased in the first place. We are particularly pleased with this Palm Beach location as the area has built up over the past few years to not only offer Aruba's best dining and nightlife, but all

maid, babysitting and catering for special parties, as well as rental of the condo when not in use, can be arranged through the PALMARUBA Management services.

So if you are looking for that perfect fit, one that is not too small or too large, as well as an experienced developer with a track record you can trust, then pay a visit to the PALMARUBA offices next to the Palm Beach gas station. Call them at 586-7300 for an appointment to learn of their excellent pre-construction prices. You can also visit them at: www.palaruba.com or follow them on Facebook or Twitter.



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Police posts Rules and Regulations for 2012 Easter Week Camping

Easter Week is Camping time along our beaches for many Arubans! And, it is almost that time of year again! In connection with the annual camping activities, Police Chief A.E. Richardson has issued a strong appeal to all citizens to comply with the conditions under which the camping permits are being issued.

The official camping period begins Monday, April 1st at 12:00 noon. This means that as of this date we can begin placing our camping gear, tents and trailers along the beaches. All objects placed before this time and date will be removed by the police. The last day to camp will be Sunday, April 15. At the end of the camping period, all objects placed along the beaches must be removed. Any items remaining will be removed at the expense of the camper by the police.

The Aruban authorities urge everyone to make a concentrated effort to keep our beaches clean during and especially after the camping period. Deposit all debris in trash cans or in plastic bags.

The Camping Request

Forms are available at the Police Administration Office as of February 21st up to March 9th week days between 8:00 to 11:30am or 1:00 to 4:30pm.

The Camping Permit comes with the following conditions:

1. Under no circumstance is it permissible to prepare B.B.Q. on the beach. At other locations B.B.Q pits may be placed, provided these are Gas B.B.Q pits.

2. Tents and trailers in use must be in good condition. These must be placed at least 10 meters away from the edge of the sea and not less than 5 meters from the public road. Violation of these distances will result in their removal by the authorities.

3. Under no circumstance is it permissible to reserve a camping location.

4. Tents, trailers or any other object may not be placed at locations designated for such by the government.

5. Each tent or trailer must be adequately equipped with first aid equipment.

6. It is strictly prohibited to display obscene or indecent

posters or other visual immoral material on tents, trailers or on other objects.

7. The camping activity must be in conformity with the conditions under which the permits were issued.

8. It is strictly forbidden to drive motor vehicles, bicycles, horses or carts on the beaches and particularly at areas designated for pedestrian passage and the general public.

9. It is strictly forbidden to ignite fires on our beaches.

10. It is strictly forbidden to sell food, soft drinks, mixed drinks, or any other type of article on the beach without an official permit for this purpose.

11. During the week music may be played only from the trailer and only until 10:00pm. On the weekend music may be played up to 12:00 midnight and in such a manner as to not disturb other campers. The use of sound systems or amplifiers is permitted as long as other campers are not molested by this.

12. It is strictly forbidden to trim or cut trees in the area without a permit for same.

13. It is prohibited to drive

boats or anchor these in the swimming zone. Boats may not be tied to the boys in the water.

14. It is prohibited to use wooden pallets or cartons on the beach. If these are used they will be removed by the police.

15. It is strictly prohibited to use the beach or coconut trees as a toilet, a place to go to the bathroom.

16. Horses and dogs are not permitted on our beaches.

17. Use of the beach huts for camping purposes is strictly forbidden, all huts must remain free to be used by others who come to enjoy the day.

18. Under no circumstance is it allowed to dirty the beaches. The beaches must be kept clean at all times. Broken bottles, glass splinters may not be left behind. Trash may not be thrown into the ocean.

19. The permit issued to one person may not be passed along to someone else.

20. The permit issued must be kept intact in the tent or trailer and displayed in such a manner that it is visible to the controlling officer of the law.

21. The person for whom the permit was issued must bear in mind that the permit issued gives him/her the exclusive right to camp at the designated area during the specific camping period. Before the camping period the permit is not valid. This means that it is not permissible to reserve, mark off, put up fences, or ropes, etc. at any location before the date stipulated.

22. The holder of a permit remains responsible for whatever damage caused to others through the use of tents, trailers or other objects.

23. Any order issued by the police with respect to the public order or the security of persons, or property, must be followed unequivocally.

24. It is strictly forbidden to use the Huts for camping purposes, these must remain free to use by others during the day.

25. Anyone acting contrary to the stipulated conditions in the permit will be considered to not have a permit, hence his/her permit will be revoked. **The last day to request a permit for camping is March 9th, 2012!**



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Intermission	
6th	\$175
7th	\$225
8th	Progr.
9th	\$500



Bingo every Wednesday, Friday & Sunday

More Slot winners at Palm Beach Casino at the Westin Resort!



Last Sunday at the Palm Beach Casino Mrs. Dale Godfrey from Canada hit the jackpot and won a total amount of \$2400 at our Slot Machine "Double Wild".

Also on the same day Mr. Antoni Delledomme also

from Canada won a total amount of \$2500 at our Slot Machine "Wild & Lucky".

Both winners were very happy & enjoying their time playing at Palm Beach Casino with a nice ambience.

Meryl Streep fears she might be overrated

(AFP)--Two-time Oscar winner Meryl Streep, continuing her sweep through awards season Tuesday by picking up a Golden Bear lifetime achievement prize at the Berlin film festival, confessed she might be overrated.

Streep told reporters ahead of a gala screening of her Margaret Thatcher biopic "The Iron Lady" for which she is expected to bag her third Academy Award, that she felt her peers' level of acting had soared in recent years.

Asked whether the hype around the woman frequently called the world's top actress might just be exaggerated, the 62-year-old said incredulously: "Yeah. Of course. Of course."

"I do think that the level of acting in general -- everybody talks about the golden age of Hollywood but I really think that the level of acting now is higher, deeper, more daring,

more adventurous and (deeply) felt and edgy," she said.

Asked whose work might be on a par with her own best roles, she quipped, "Oh there are only 180.

"This year, particularly for women, there have been so many wonderful performances, many of them not even nominated, for instance our co-star Olivia Colman in a film called 'Tyrannosaur' which is absolutely breathtaking and she has not been recognised for it," she said.

Colman played Thatcher's daughter Carol in "The Iron Lady."

Streep, who has appeared in more than 40 films, captured a best actress Oscar for "Sophie's Choice" in 1982 and for best supporting actress in "Kramer vs Kramer" in 1979.

The Berlin festival is showing a retrospective of Streep's top films in honour of her Golden Bear.

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Preparations underway for 2012 National Flag and Anthem Day



ORANJESTAD -- Registration forms for the marches on Flag and Anthem Day can be obtained at the office of the Department of Culture located near the vicinity of the San Francisco Church in Oranjestad, or at the main entrance of the City Hall Building.

The National Days Celebration Commission (CCDN) invites all uniformed groups; scouts, social groups, our uniformed authorities, cultural and athletic groups to pick up the required registration form to be able to participate in the formal marches on Flag and Anthem Day.

The marching groups have grown over the years with many more groups participating. This is a splendid opportunity for the community and our digni-

taries to become familiar with all our uniformed groups in the community.

These groups have become a welcome and attractive addition to the formal ceremonies on March 18 and definitely contribute to the celebration of our national day.

For more information, please contact John Hassell, member of the CCDN commission, at telephone 732-0252 or at email: j.hassell@arubagovernment.aw.

The CCDN group is appealing to all uniformed groups to take advantage of this excellent opportunity to participate in the marches on March 18. The year's celebration will mark the end of our celebrations of the 25th anniversary of our Status Aparte.

Preparations in full swing for National Day Celebrations On March 18, 2012



ORANJESTAD -- Preparations for the formation of a children's Choir is in the works for a recital on our National Flag and Anthem Day celebrations. This year's National Flag and Anthem Day will mark the end of our 25th Status Aparte Anniversary celebrations.

The formal ceremonies will take place on the morning of March 18 in front of the City Hall Building. The special recital will take place at this site as well.

For the special recital the CCDN Commission has succeeded in getting a large group of school children (about 350 kids) to participate in the songs recital. They will sing the National Anthem and 4 other songs. These school

children will comprise the national choir.

The orchestra will be under the direction of Johnny Croes who will accompany the children's choir. The national choir will be under the direction of Maybelline Arends-Croes. Each choir participant will receive a special T-shirt to wear during the choir performances.

The CCDN Commission appeals to all schools to cooperate with selecting 15 to 20 kids so that they can recruit the number needed for the special national choir. Schools and teachers willing to participate should contact Maybelline Arends-Croes at Telephone 582-1334 or via email: maybearends@gmail.com.

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Xi urges 'greater balance' in US-China trade

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping yesterday called for "greater balance" in trade and investment between the United States and China, addressing US concerns on the issue.

"We should tap our cooperation potential, create more bright spots in our cooperation and strive for greater balance in trade and investment between the two countries," Xi

said after talks with US President Barack Obama.

"We should address each other's economic and trade concerns through dialogue and consultation, not protectionism, and uphold the mutually beneficial pattern of China-US economic relations and trade," Xi said.

He was speaking during a State Department lunch with US Secretary of State Hillary

Clinton and Vice President Joe Biden.

China's trade surplus with the United States is a sensitive issue as US lawmakers accuse Beijing of keeping the value of its currency unfairly low to fuel inexpensive exports that have turned China into a manufacturing giant.

US officials and business leaders have in the past called for China and other countries to increase their investments in the United States as a means to create US jobs.

Egypt slaps travel ban on Australian, American

CAIRO (AFP) - Egypt's public prosecutor said yesterday an Australian journalist and a US student were barred from leaving the country, a day after they were released from detention on suspicion of bribing activists.

Freelance reporter Austin Mackell and American student Derek Ludovici were arrested on Saturday along with their Egyptian translator Aliya Alwi in the Nile Delta city of Ma-

halla, accused of paying Egyptians to stage protests against the authorities.

"The Egyptian prosecution is still investigating a case in which a US citizen and an Australian are accused of bribing workers of Mahalla to stage strikes as part of the civil disobedience," the prosecutor's office said in a statement carried by the official MENA news agency.

Russians arrest 10 Colombians with stolen jewels worth \$1.4m

SAINT PETERSBURG (AFP) - Russian police arrested 10 Colombian nationals who were attempting to smuggle stolen jewellery valued at \$1.4 million out of the country, the transport police said yesterday.

"Ten Colombians were detained after an operation by Moscow and Saint Petersburg police in Domodedovo airport's customs," transport police chief for the northwest region Vadim Kachirin said in a press release.

The criminals were carrying some of the jewellery in their luggage, while a female accomplice wore some on her body, the press release said.

The jewellery has a value of 43 million rubles (\$1.4 million, 1.0 million euros) and belongs to several Russian companies that were planning to display the pieces at an international exhibition in March. It was stolen earlier this month.

East Europe protests Dutch anti-immigrant website

THE HAGUE (AFP) - Ten eastern European countries protested to the Dutch government yesterday about an anti-immigrant website by a rightwing party, urging The Hague to reject what they branded a "deplorable initiative".

An open letter was signed by ambassadors and representatives from countries including Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Romania, piling pressure on Prime Minister Mark Rutte to take a stance on the "discriminatory" site.

Sent to party leaders in the Dutch parliament, the letter "expressed concern" over the website set up by the Dutch Freedom Party (PVV) where readers can lodge complaints against eastern European migrants.

"Targeting a selected group of people living in the Netherlands is clearly discriminatory and degrading in its intents and purposes," said the letter, which was published on Dutch media websites yesterday.

"We invite Dutch society and its political leaders to distance themselves from this deplorable initiative."

The Freedom Party, whose anti-Islamist leader Geert Wilders was acquitted of hate speech last year, last week launched the site entitled "Report Middle and Eastern Europeans".

Respondents can tick "yes" or "no" when asked whether they have experienced "nuisances" such as loud noise,

parking, drunkenness, squalor or the loss of jobs to migrant workers from eastern European countries.

The protest letter warned that the website threatened to tarnish the Netherlands' image as a tolerant country, where eastern European labour "contribute significantly to the growth of the Dutch economy".

Wilders said the site has had more than 32,000 hits since its launch.

But the European Commission said although the site was not breaking any laws, it "completely went against the principles" of freedom and the free movement of people in Europe.

"It's always easy to blame others, but blame doesn't often solve problems," its Digital Agenda Commissioner Neelie Kroes wrote on her blog. "It's ridiculous to think that denouncing others on a website will make Netherlands or EU a better place."

The protest letter said the PVV website did not help the dialogue about the lives of an estimated 200,000 to 300,000 immigrant workers in the Netherlands.

Hungary's ambassador to the Netherlands, Gyula Sumeghy, told AFP he hoped the letter would provoke a "strong condemnation" from political leaders.

Dutch Foreign Minister Uri Rosenthal will meet the 10 ambassadors on Friday to discuss the letter, a foreign affairs official told AFP.



Jeddah : An Asian street vendor sells roses to drivers in the Saudi Red Sea port of Jeddah on February 14, 2012, where open celebration of Valentine's Day is officially banned along with the desert kingdom's strict Islamic laws.
(AFP PHOTO)

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Garden Tours at Fantastic Gardens

Interview with Anneliz Jonkhout & Giovanni Lew Jen Tai, Project Leaders

Fantastic Gardens recently introduced a new activity on the market. 'As the commercial manager and one of the leaders of this project, I'm really proud to say that we now also support Aruba's tourism. Increasing the knowledge of tourists visiting our island on information about our local flora' says Giovanni.

What is this new product on the market?

With great pleasure we announce that we have an exciting garden tour to offer to all the international visitors. . All tourists joining 'Our Hortus Fantastica Tour' will enjoy "Aruba's Greenest Spot" where we cultivate 70% of our plants for the local market. Amongst them the always flowering bougainvilleas in different colors and sizes.

What can one learn in this garden tour?

The idea behind this project is to inform all tourists about Aruba's Flora.

At Fantastic Gardens,

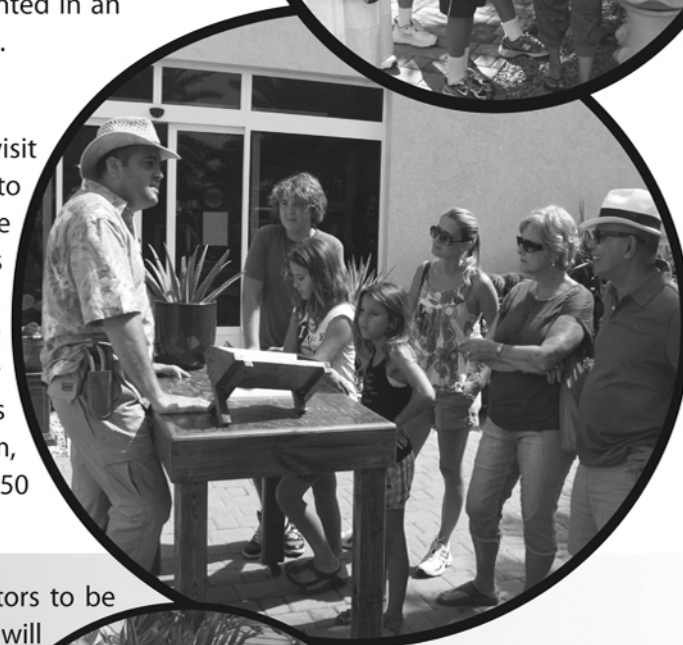
we have a large variety of plants, but the ones considered as local plants are rather a minority. We offer them info on these very peculiar plants, for example Kibrahacha, Divi, Divi, Shimarucu, Kukwisa and Calbas. This tour is presented in an entertaining way and is very interactive.

How can one take this tour?

Anyone who wants to take this tour can visit our Frangipani Café and participate to learn about our nature and simply have a good time with us nature lovers. Tours are everyday at 10am or 4pm. Group tours are available upon special request for the price of US \$ 5 per person. For more information please contact us on www.fantasticgardensaruba.com, facebook or simply call us at 297-5832650 and register yourself for our tour.

We take this opportunity to invite visitors to be a part of this amazing experience that will bring you closer to nature.

"At first I wasn't pleased to hear that our tour would first stop at a garden center, but I couldn't help but be amazed by all the things Fantastic Gardens had to offer and I was very much impressed by the way the tour was presented" – Victoria Barnes, Pittsburg USA



"For a simple garden tour, this one was very entertaining and informative" – David McCullun, Georgia, USA



Pilot shortage looms, warns UN aviation agency

MONTREAL (AFP) - The United Nations aviation agency has launched a video contest to try to get young adults interested in the airline industry, warning that a world-wide pilot shortage looms.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)'s

YouTube contest asks entries to "excite young people about becoming an aviation professional." The winners will be invited to the World Aviation Training Conference and Tradeshow in Orlando, Florida in April. Contest rules are available on its website at icao.int



COSTA RICA, San Jose : Members of gay and lesbian organizations demonstrate in front of the Presidential Palace in San Jose on February 14, 2012. About one hundred Costa Rican gays rallied outside the government house to ask President Laura Chinchilla for a law legalizing the homosexual unions. (AFP PHOTO)

Western doctors check on Tymoshenko's health

KHARKIV (AFP) - A team of Western doctors arrived yesterday at the prison where Ukraine's ex-premier Yulia Tymoshenko is held to examine the opposition leader amid complaints about her treatment and health.

The three Canadian and two German medics include a cardiologist and a nervous system expert, the former Soviet republic's penitentiary system said in a statement.

The examination began yesterday afternoon, the Ukraine's deputy health minister Raisa Moiseyenko said.

The group was expected to issue a statement late today after completing the examinations.

Tibet protesters arrested in US amid China visit



UNITED STATES, Washington : Falun Gong practitioners meditate during a pro-Tibetan demonstration February 14, 2012 in Lafayette Park across from the White House in Washington, DC. As Chinese Vice President Xi Jinping and US President Barack Obama held talks at the White House, dozens of impassioned pro-Tibet and anti-Chinese government activists outside meditated, waved flags and chanted "China lies, Tibetans die" and "Xi, Tibet will be free!" At least 19 Tibetans have set fire to themselves in the past year to protest what they see as a lack of rights under Chinese rule, leading Beijing to impose virtual martial law, according to residents and exiled groups. (AFP PHOTO)

THE MORNING NEWS photo contest deadline extended by popular demand



THE MORNING NEWS is extending its photo contest to the end of the carnival season. The upcoming weeks filled with fabulous events will offer many great photo ops, and your pix and win you terrific prizes and the opportunity to showcase your work for all the world to see. Visit our website: www.themorningnewsaruba.com where the online edition is read by thousands to subscribe at no cost. Each day, as

the paper is put online, you will receive an link to the current edition in your e-mail inbox; there is no cost whatsoever for this service.

Just subscribing to THE MORNING NEWS online will earn you a chance to win two tickets to Bonaire with Tiara Air Aruba, and sending in your photos will earn more raffle tickets in the box and more chances to win. The contest is open to Aruban residents

and visitors alike.

Contest Rules:

1. Subscribe to THE MORNING NEWS online - it's free!!
2. Go to www.themorningnewsaruba.com, click the subscribe button and follow directions to receive THE MORNING NEWS delivered to your e-mail box daily for no charge.
3. Send an e-mail to themorningnewsaruba@aol.com to inform the office of

your user name and contact info: real name, address, & phone number, and receive 1 raffle ticket

4. Like us on Facebook, and receive a second raffle ticket

5. Raffle tickets are for final drawing on Ash Wednesday 2012;

6. Grand Prize:

Airfare for two to Bonaire with Tiara Airlines and other fabulous prizes

Photo contest prizes: You must subscribe to submit

1. Send us your favorite carnival pix via e-mail or deliver to our office on Caya Betico Croes

Just across from the Valero station.

2. "Picks of the day and week" will appear in THE MORNING NEWS

3. Contest begins today and deadline for submissions of photos is Monday, February 20, 2012 at 6:00 PM; drawing for raffle will take place on Ash Wednesday, February 22.

4. Judging is final; winners will be announced in Friday's paper, February 24.

5. Each photo submis-



"THE MORNING NEWS photo contest makes me want to jump and dance!!"

sion earns a raffle ticket towards the Ash Wednesday drawing

Prizes for the Carnival photo Contest:

Grand Prize: 3 days/2 nights stay at Boardwalk Apartments

2nd Prize: Trip for two on Mi Dushi Sailboat

3rd Prize: Complete Play package at Cool Casino

Prize winners will receive additional raffle tickets towards final drawing, and a special surprise for the grand prize winning photo.

No purchase necessary to participate; subscription to THE MORNING NEWS and submission of photos are free; photos will only be used for Carnival promotion and owners retain all rights.

Aspirin could beat cancer spread: Australian study



SYDNEY (AFP) - Aspirin and other household drugs may inhibit the spread of cancer because they help shut down the chemical "highways" which feed tumours, Australian re-

searchers said Tuesday.

Scientists at Melbourne's Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre said they have made a biological breakthrough helping explain how lymphatic vessels -- key to the transmission of tumours throughout the body -- respond to cancer.

"We've shown that molecules like the aspirin... could effectively work by reducing the dilation of these major vessels and thereby reducing the capacity of tumours to spread to distant sites," researcher Steven Stacker said.

Doctors have long suspected that non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as aspirin may help inhibit the spread of cancer but they have been unable to pinpoint exactly how this is done.

By studying cells in lymphatic vessels, the researchers found that a particular gene changed its expression in cancers which spread, but not when the cancer did not spread.

The results published in Cancer Cell journal reveal that the gene is a link between a tumour's growth and the cellular pathway which can cause inflammation and dilation of vessels throughout the body.

Once these lymphatic vessels widen, the capacity for them to act as "supply lines" to tumours and become more effective conduits for the cancer to spread is increased.

But aspirin acts to shut down the dilation of the vessels.

"So it seems like we have found a pivotal junction point in a biochemical sense between all these different contributors," Stacker said.

The discovery could lead to new and improved drugs which could help contain

many solid tumours, including breast and prostate cancer, as well as potentially provide an "early warning system" before a tumour begins to spread.

Last year, a study published in medical journal The Lancet found that rates of cancer of the colon, prostate, lung, brain

and throat were all reduced by daily aspirin use.

Many doctors recommend regular use of aspirin to lower the risk of heart attack, clot-related strokes and other blood flow problems. A downside of extended daily use is the risk of stomach problems.

5 Ways to Prevent High Blood Pressure:

(Also called "The Silent Killer")

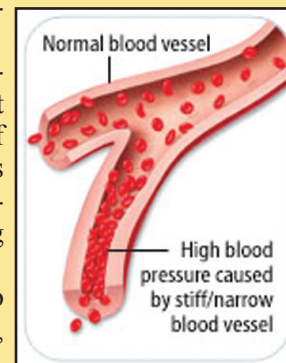
1. **Get Moving:** Exercise is one of the best and most enjoyable ways to keep your blood pressure in the safe zone.

2. **Eat Well:** A diet rich in vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy, with moderate amounts of fish and low amounts of meat has been shown to lower blood pressure even if you don't do anything else on this list.

3. **Lose Weight:** This one is not so easy, but if you follow the first two, it may not be as hard as you think.

4. **Don't Smoke:** This one is either really easy or really hard. If you don't smoke, don't start—easy. If you smoke, stop—not so easy.

5. **Limit Alcohol:** Alcohol can raise blood pressure. The older we get, the more we need to monitor our blood pressure. Hypertension can creep up on you with devastating results, but by being vigilant and taking the steps necessary to control it, you and your loved ones can sleep peacefully.



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New York's 'once-a-century' storms to become common: study

PARIS (AFP) - Massive storm surges that statistically threaten New York City once a century could occur at intervals from three to 20 years by 2100, according to estimates by US scientists published Tuesday.

Researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Princeton University built a computer model that simulated tens of thousands of storms under different scenarios for global warming.

In the model, intense storms become more frequent by the period from 2081 to 2100, a finding that backs previous research, they found.

Warmer temperatures drive up sea levels through thermal expansion and also provide the raw fuel for hurricanes.

Today a "100-year" land-

falling storm causes a flood surge of about two metres (more than six feet) in New York. By 2100, this could occur at intervals of just three to 20 years, according to the paper.

An apocalyptic flood, bringing a surge of three metres (10 feet), that today has a risk of occurring once every five centuries would occur statistically every 25 to 240 years.

Both kinds of events would easily top Manhattan's present sea walls, which stand 1.5 metres (nearly five feet), the investigators noted.

The highest surge flood recorded in New York was in 1821 and measured 3.2 metres (10.4 feet), according to the probe, published in the journal Nature Climate Change.

Sci-Tech

Firm in Apple row seeks to ban China iPad imports

(AFP) - An electronics firm embroiled in a copyright row with Apple said Tuesday it would ask Chinese customs to block iPad imports, as two cities pulled the tablet computers from some shops over the dispute.

Proview Technology (Shenzhen) says it owns the Chinese rights for the name "iPad" and is preparing to ask customs to prevent Apple from bringing the iconic tablet computers into China -- one of the US company's biggest markets.

Apple last year took the firm to a Chinese court, claiming trademark infringement, but the court unexpectedly rejected the case over lack of evidence.

"We are preparing requests to customs for blocking iPad imports," Xie Xianghui, the firm's lawyer, told AFP.

"It is still in the process of preparation," he said, adding the requests would be made to local customs offices and not the national-level customs administration as part of a strategic, localised approach.

Proview Technology (Shen-

zhen) is owned by a Taiwanese company that registered the trademark name "iPad" in several countries including China as early as 2000 -- years before Apple began selling the product.

The US giant subsequently bought the rights for the global trademark, but Proview claims it retained the Chinese rights.

Apple said it was the rightful owner of the trademark.

"We bought Proview's worldwide rights to the iPad trademark in 10 different countries several years ago," Apple said in a statement given to AFP on Tuesday. "Proview refuses to honour their agreement with Apple in China."

Xie said the firm had lodged complaints in more than 10 cities across China after Apple lost the case in December.

According to the official Global Times newspaper, at least 45 iPads have been seized in Shijiazhuang city in the northern province of Hebei since last Thursday.

Officials at the city's industrial and commercial bureau confirmed that authorities confiscated some iPads, but refused to comment on specific numbers.

Authorities in another city, Zhengzhou in the central province of Henan, had also raided one retailer and seized 87 iPads, the official Xinhua news agency said late Tuesday.

However, the iPad -- which was officially launched in mainland China in September 2010 -- remains on sale across the nation's five Apple stores, electronics retailers and through some on-line shopping sites.

The craze for all things Apple in China has triggered widespread cloning of iPhones and iPads over the years.

In July, an American blogger uncovered fake Apple stores in the southwestern city of Kunming, and police in Shanghai arrested five people in September for making counterfeit iPhones.

US, EU approve Google purchase of Motorola Mobility

(AFP) - US and European regulators gave the green light Monday to Internet giant Google's \$12.5 billion acquisition of Motorola Mobility.

In a related decision, the Justice Department's antitrust division also approved the purchase by Apple, Microsoft and Research In Motion (RIM) of patents from Nortel Networks and the acquisition by Apple of Novell patents.

The Justice Department said it examined the three deals simultaneously to deter-

mine "whether the acquiring firms could use these patents to raise rivals' costs or foreclose competition."

Google acquired 17,000 patents with the purchase of Motorola Mobility and has been strengthening its patent portfolio as the fight for dominance in the booming smartphone and tablet computer market increasingly involves lawsuits claiming infringement of patented technology.

Apple and South Korea's Samsung, whose devices are powered by Google's Android software, are currently involved in lengthy and costly patent fights being waged on several continents.

In announcing the Motorola Mobility acquisition in August, Google chief executive Larry Page said it will "enable us to better protect Android from anti-competitive threats from Microsoft, Apple and other companies."

The Justice Department said it had focused its investigation on the licensing of standard essential patents, or SEPs.

The Justice Department's green light for the Google-Motorola Mobility deal came just hours after European Union regulators announced their approval.

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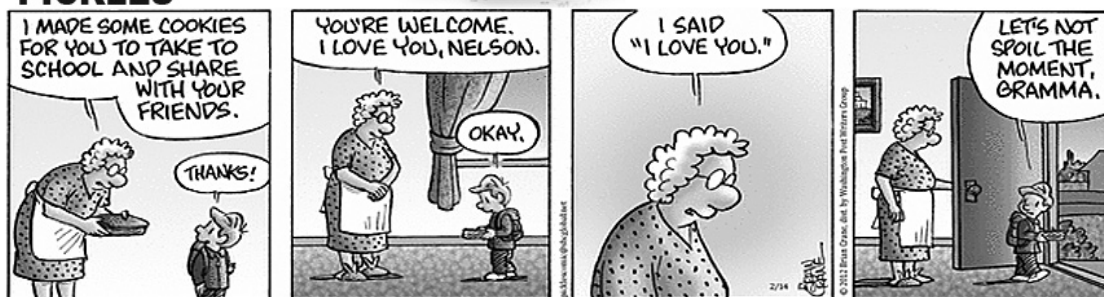
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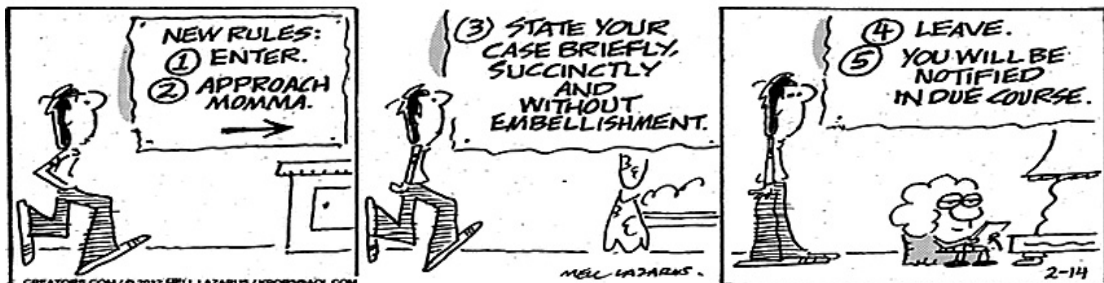
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ACROSS

1. "Goldilocks" set threesome
5. Poky
9. Summertime in Chicago: abbr.
12. Actress Jergens
14. Add employees
15. Gambling game
16. Perfect in every way
17. Perched on
18. "East of Eden" brother
19. Lead singer's instrument, in the '60s
21. River to the Laptev Sea
22. CEO: abbr.
23. Dutch beer brand
25. Throws suspicion on
29. Author Wiesel
30. Mechanic's soap
31. Cissy Houston, to Dionne Warwick
34. Perform a woolgathering job
38. About
40. Musical term: abbr.
41. Backerei treat
42. Specialty
43. Down in the mouth
45. Bills in a Salvation Army kettle
46. Berne's river
48. Impassioned
50. Fairy tale setting
53. Second "Scarborough

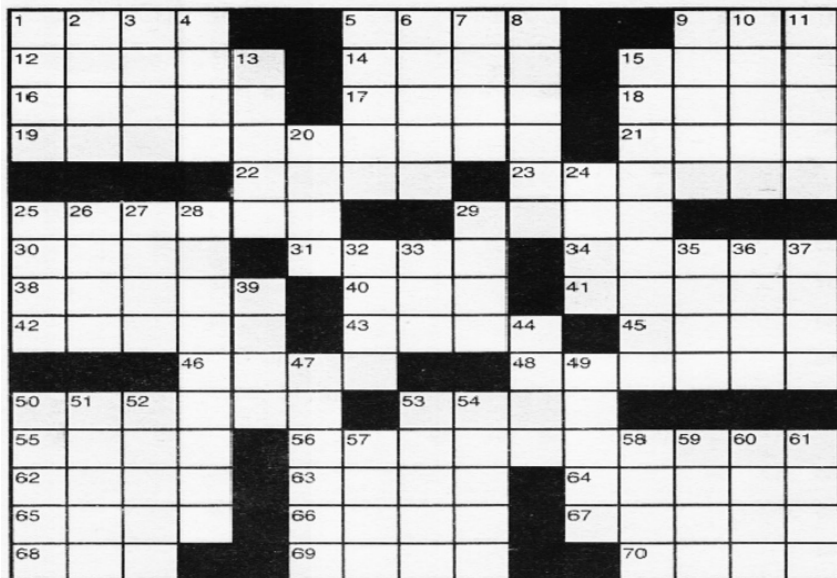
55. Touched ground
56. Unpredictable
62. "Arrivederci, —"
63. Dish of many ingredients
64. Confuse
65. At another time
66. Family members: abbr.
67. Laborers
68. Hamilton bill
69. Expunge
70. Mmes., across the Pyrennes

DOWN

1. Fish lure
2. Norse epic
3. Judge
4. Dead body, to Chandler
5. Be generous

TOP THAT!

6. Small monkeys
7. Mangle
8. Revoke
9. Proofreader's mark
10. Bee type
11. Having harmonic relations
13. Secretly marry
15. Lie
20. Livy's bear
24. Atomizer's output
25. Caramel-topped dessert
26. Indian VIP
27. With: Fr.
28. Cocktail party quaff
29. "—, Brute!"
32. Impetus
33. It's nothing
35. Irish river
36. Egyptian solar disk
37. Take a load off
39. Blue hue
44. Gift bearers of the Bible
47. Guinness item
49. Quick summary
50. Gem unit
51. Single-handedly
52. Randy's fellow judge
53. Motorcyclist's accident
54. Wakened
57. Mariner's direction
58. Day of Julius's downfall
59. Repute
60. Radius's neighbor
61. Conference pt.

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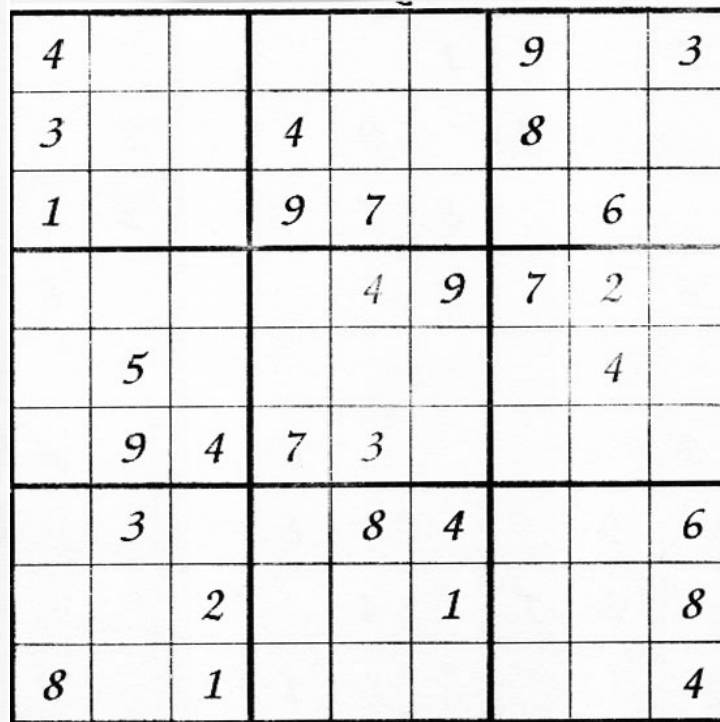
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Sudoku



SOLUTION

4	9	3	8	1	2	5	7	6
3	4	8	6	5	7	2	9	1
1	9	7	6	2	5	4	8	3
5	4	2	8	3	7	9	1	6
9	4	7	3	1	6	5	2	8
3	8	4	6	5	2	7	9	1
2	1	8	5	4	9	3	7	6
8	1	4	6	3	7	9	2	5
5	7	6	2	8	1	4	9	3

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9
A number is Never repeated in a row or column.
In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9



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Finance

Geithner asks Congress to act on budget, tax reform

WASHINGTON (AFP) - US Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner urged Congress to do more to help the nation's ranks of unemployed Tuesday, as he previewed tax reform plans and defended President Barack Obama's budget.

Stressing the fragile nature of the US recovery -- and ding-ing the previous Republican administration for helping dig the hole Americans now find themselves in -- Geithner told the Senate finance committee that lawmakers needed to make law.

"While the economy is gaining strength, we still face significant economic challenges. Unemployment, at 8.3 percent, is still far too high," he said. "There are 13 million Americans looking for work. We have an obligation to them."

Top of his wish list was passage of Obama's 2013 budget.

The White House on Monday rolled out a \$3.8 trillion budget that would increase taxes on the wealthy, while steering cash toward job creation in the short term and cut-

ting deficits in the long term.

Republicans have roundly condemned the plan as replete with tax increases and as repeating "failed" efforts to stimulate the economy through spending.

The proposals face little prospect of passing the Republican-controlled House of Representatives with US politics in the grip of election-year sclerosis.

But Geithner appeared eager to fight the good fight.

"I know the conventional wisdom in Washington is that this debate we begin today does not matter because Congress is too divided to legislate in this election year," he said.

"But this debate is a very important debate, it matters because this is a fundamental debate about economic priorities, about how to increase growth and opportunity."

Geithner also hit George W. Bush for bequeathing the administration a legacy of ashes.

"The harm caused by the crisis came on top of a set of

deep, preexisting economic difficulties. In the years leading up to the crisis, the average middle-class family saw few gains in income... and the fiscal policies of the the previous administration turned record budget surpluses into substantial deficits."

Eurozone delays crucial Greek bailout decision

BRUSSELS (AFP) - Eurozone finance ministers put a new Greek bailout on hold yesterday after Athens failed to meet conditions demanded by lenders in return for a rescue package it desperately needs to avoid default.

The eurozone had demanded that Greece's finance minister come to Brussels on Wednesday with an extra 325 million euros in budget cuts and written pledges from politicians that they will implement EU-ordered austerity measures.

But Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, head of the group of eurozone finance ministers, decided to switch the meeting to a conference call instead and prepare for previously scheduled talks in Brussels on Monday.

"I did not yet receive the re-

Slovenian govt unsurprised by Moody's downgrade

LJUBLJANA (AFP) - Slovenia's newly appointed government reacted without surprise Tuesday to a downgrade of its credit rating by Moody's, saying it was preparing measures to prevent further such moves.

"More (agencies) might downgrade our rating, but our task is to prepare a budget revision as soon as possible, cut spending and balance our pub-

lic finances," Economy Minister Radovan Zerjav said after Moody's downgraded Slovenia's debt rating by one notch to A2.

"We have already launched the necessary measures that will lead to improving our rating," he added.

Moody's on Monday chopped the debt ratings of nine EU countries, including Italy, Spain, Portugal and Slovenia, casting doubt over whether Europe's leaders were doing enough to reverse the downslide of the region's economy and financial sector.

The downgrade comes just after Slovenia's parliament appointed Friday a new centre-right government that said its first priority would be to prepare a revised budget that would cut spending to fall in line with income.

On Monday, incoming Prime Minister Janez Jansa already predicted: "We can expect over the next weeks more downgrades of our rating."

Once an economic frontrunner among the countries that joined the European Union in 2004, small Slovenia has seen interest rates on its debt soar and the export-dependent economy is close to recession.

The national debt, although low by eurozone standards, has also grown sharply in recent years.



Current as of: 02/14/2012	Currency Code	Buying rate banknotes	Buying Cheques	Selling Rate
U.S.A.	USD	1.77	1.78	1.80
Dutch Antilles	ANG	98.00	100.00	100.20
Canada	CAD	1.76	1.78	1.80
Britain	GBP	2.73	2.84	2.84
Switzerland	CHF	194.10	194.82	195.62
Netherlands	EUR	232.42	234.55	236.90
Sweden	SEK	25.72	26.44	27.24
Denmark	DKK	30.59	31.18	31.98
Norway	NOK	30.16	30.88	31.68
Japan	JPY	225.98	228.05	230.34

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Carnaval Schedule

FEBRUARY

Wednesday, February 15:
 * **Hebbe Hebbe** - Parkinglot Post Aruba N.V. - 8 p.m.

Thursday, February 16:
 * **Parada di Luz San Nicolas** - 8 p.m.

Friday, February 17:
 * **Ban Djo Djo** - 7 p.m. - 1 p.m. - Plaza Betico Croes

Saturday, February 18:
 * **Jouvert Morning** - 4 a.m.
 * **San Nicolas Grand Parade** - 12 p.m.

Sunday, February 19:
 * **Oranjestad Grand Parade** - 10 a.m.

Monday, February 20:
 * **Carnaval Monday (national holiday)**
 * **Momito - San Nicolas**

Tuesday, February 21:
 * **Burn Momo (closing of Aruba's Carnaval season)**
 - Aruba Entertainment Center - 7 p.m.



Visit the Mario Hernandez shop for the finest in Latin American designer accessories



Cashmir shawl with suede fringe and applique



casual wear, sturdy luggage and accessories

"It's all in the details," believes the owners of the Mario Hernandez shop in the Paseo Herencia Mall. "The fine handcraftsmanship and classic styling of the Mario Hernandez accessories have placed them in high demand around the world, and we are proud to have the only MH store on Aruba."

The cozy little shop can be found tucked away just across from The Cinemas ticket booth, featuring fine quality leather goods with a trendy touch, the best of the current Mario Hernandez designer collection. It also features a stylish selection of the designer's logo unisex shirts and stunning silk scarves. Our personal favorite was a cashmere shawl with MH 25th anniversary Chrysalis motif in suede appliques; the look and feel of it is simply gorgeous. Shawls and scarves perfectly combine with the buttery leather handbags and accessories for an ensemble fashion statement.

The Mario Hernandez collection encompasses luggage, handbags and wallets of every sort, with specialized functions. "Our men's accessories

are extremely popular; literally flying off the shelves," note the owners. In the two years since they opened their doors, they have found patrons are very impressed with the quality and style of the goods.

Just a short time ago, the design house created an extremely attractive new line featuring the art of William DeBilzan, noted American artist whose work is often seen adorning the chic homes of television characters; he has popular galleries in both Florida and California and his work is exhibited in over 28 galleries across the U.S. and Europe.

Mario Hernandez has been creating and designing products for over 30 years; his name is synonymous with manufacturing excellence and innovation in design. The store in Paseo Herencia Mall in Palm Beach is opened until 10:00 PM for convenient night-time shopping and boasts the latest collection of these timelessly styled accessories, each of them handcrafted at the Bogotá factory.

by Rosalie Klein

Gold Coast Aruba: Great savings for large families on holiday rentals



Aruba's newest and most innovative gated community has enjoyed steady sales since breaking ground, as many are finding the secure surroundings and outstanding amenities are just what they were looking for before considering purchasing property on the island. Some owners are using the villas or town homes as vacation retreats rather than full time and are taking advantage of Gold Coast's rental services to turn their investment into ready income.

"The greater portion of home owners are using their 'home away from home' in Aruba to escape the winter months, or spend holidays with the family on the island," noted Gold Coast developer Fito Croes. To assist in the demand for more complete facilities for groups and families, famed hotelier Ed Malone has been placed in charge of the rental program.

Staying at Gold Coast is a very attractive proposition for those traveling with groups that would require multiple hotel rooms. Two and three bedroom Villas or Town Homes accommodate large numbers and offer extensive amenities along with a final cost resulting in considerable savings. The community is minutes to the best beaches and all the casino action, and offers a quiet and secluded getaway with two swimming pools and specialized services with more on the way, such as a fitness room, tennis courts and mini-mall. Ed can arrange maid service, babysitters, caterers, airline pick-up and drop-off; they even boast a

shopping service to stock your shelves before arrival.

Gold Coast accommodations are elegant and spacious, offering privacy for parents or a few couples. Beautifully appointed kitchens and bath-

tion, individual washer/dryer, and are fully air-conditioned. Cribs, high chairs and hair dryers are available for a modest fee. Concierge services to arrange rental cars, spa appointments, activities



rooms grace each abode; barbecues and lounges are provided for friendly cookouts and truly savoring the island life. All homes come with cable TV, high-speed fiber-optic Internet connec-

and restaurant reservations are all part of the package.

Check-in for your holiday escape is conducted in the comfort of your vacation home, not while waiting on line at check-in desk. In every way, Gold Coast seeks to pamper their guests while providing them with the feeling of being in a cozy community, not the normally bustling resort, particularly experienced during the major holidays. If you wish an optimal vacation experience with great savings, visit their website: www.goldcoastaruba.com to get acquainted with the community and the layout, details and availability of accommodations, or call 586-2200 to talk personally to a Gold Coast representative.



SPORTS

Tennis: Hantuchova, Lisicki upset in Doha



Daniela Hantuchova of Slovakia

DOHA (AFP) - Slovak glamour girl Daniela Hantuchova was sent packing in the first round of the WTA Qatar Open by little known Romanian Simona Halep on Tuesday as ninth seed Sabine Lisicki was shocked by fellow German Angelique Kerber.

Hantuchova, who won in Pattaya last week, ran into an aggressive baseliner who played a brilliant tie-breaker to clinch a 3-6, 6-2, 7-6 (7/4) victory after two hours and 32 minutes on court.

"This is one of the best wins of my career, she is a good

player, but I'm happy to go into the second round," said Halep after beating the 15th seed.

"I felt pain in my leg but I kept going," added the Romanian, who played with a heavily strapped thigh but nevertheless matched her rival shot for shot, taking a 3-0 lead in the tie-break before closing out when Hantuchova blasted into the net.

Hantuchova's upset followed the 4-6, 6-4, 6-1 ouster of Lisicki by recent Paris Open winner Kerber.

It was the fourth time in as many matches that Kerber had gotten the better of her 14th-ranked compatriot, considered one of the rising stars of the game.

"She's a great player who is also a good friend, so it's not easy playing against her," Kerber said.

"We travel together and live in the same hotels, but I was focused on my game."

Kerber's form has been nothing short of spectacular recently, the German reaching at least the semis in six of the past 10 tournaments she played before winning her first WTA title in Paris last weekend where she beat French-

woman Marion Bartoli.

"I am really playing well, but this is a big tournament with many stars playing, but I will really try my best," said the 22-ranked player.

Lisicki said: "I didn't play well at all. I was unwell last week and was recovering. Also I made a lot of unforced errors. Played quite bad, awful in fact."

She added that her focus this year was on the Olympics more than anything else.

"I'm very much looking forward to the Olympics. I have many friends that have been there, and they've told me how nice it is."

"I'm sure it's an extraordinary experience to just be there and play. For me, it's even nicer that it's going to be held in Wimbledon on grass, so it's good."

The top eight players have been given first round byes and will see action only on Wednesday, with world number one Victoria Azarenka of Belarus and Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark the favourites.

Azarenka will take on Germany's Mona Barthel in the second round, while Wozniacki plays Czech Lucie Safarova.

Football: Grondona tight-lipped over Belgrano furore

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Argentina Football Association (AFA) president Julio Grondona said Tuesday he did not know whether world governing body FIFA could sanction Argentina for naming its top tier tournament after ARA General Belgrano, a naval ship torpedoed by a British submarine in 1982.

Tensions between Argentina and Britain have increased in recent weeks with the approaching 30-year anniversary in April of the start of the ten-week conflict over the Falkland Islands - called Las Malvinas in Argentina.

FIFA have reportedly asked

the AFA for clarification of reports that the Argentina league season, which begins on Friday, will be the known as the Crucero General Belgrano Primera Division - Cruiser General Belgrano First Division in English.

Argentina lost 649 servicemen in the war, 323 on the Belgrano.

"I don't know about that situation," said Grondona, who is also a FIFA vice-president, dryly when asked about the reports that the AFA could be sanctioned for breaching Article 3 of the FIFA Statutes.


An unnamed AFA

spokesman told the private DyN news agency: "Federations, when they name tournaments, they are already commercial, like in Spain, or commemorative, as in this case, generally you do what is necessary, that is to inform FIFA. The AFA isn't going to do anything that goes against the rules."

According to press reports, FIFA have asked AFA to "provide additional information" on the name given to the tournament and added that "a potential name change of the First Division would clearly be an infringement of norms".

This season's Argentina Cup would also be known as the "Gaucho Rivero" Cup, to honour a resistant to the occupation of the Falklands by the United Kingdom in 1833.

The Argentine government have been angered by the recent arrival in the Falklands of Prince William, second in line to the British throne. The prince has been deployed to the islands for six weeks as a search-and-rescue pilot.



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Golf: Tiger to play at PGA National plus two WGC events

MIAM (AFP) - Tiger Woods, trying to win his first US PGA title since September 2009, will play the Honda Classic for the first time since his amateur days and compete in the next two World Golf Championships events.

The 14-time major champion, who is chasing the all-time record of 18 major crowns won by Jack Nicklaus, announced on Tuesday on his website his upcoming schedule, which includes an unusual start at PGA National between WGC events.

Woods has not won a tour-level event since the Australian Masters in November of 2009 just before the infamous sex scandal that led to divorce from Elin Nordegren and prompted a move from Orlando to the Miami area.

The move puts Woods near the course of the Honda Clas-



sic on March 1-4, making it the perfect fit between his usual stops at the WGC Match-Play Championship next week and the WGC Cadillac Championship, to be played on March 8-11.

"I've heard great things about the Honda Classic and now that I live here I want to play whenever possible," Woods said.

Woods shared third last month at Abu Dhabi in his

2012 season opener and shared 15th last week at the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am in his US season debut, falling out of contention with a 75 in the final round.

"I'm excited about my start and look forward to keep building," Woods said. "I've made great strides from last year and hopefully all my hard work will pay off with a victory soon."

Woods won the World Challenge last December, a limited-field invitational event that serves as a fundraiser for his foundation but also offers world ranking points.

Former world number one Woods, now ranked 18th, is a three-time winner at the WGC World Match-Play, having taken the title in 2003, 2004 and 2008, and has won eight times at Doral, site of the other WGC event. His most recent triumph there was in 2007.

Woods has not played the Honda Classic since 1993, when he missed the cut as a 17-year-old amateur when the event was played at Weston Hills.

Baseball: Royals, Rays extend contracts of managers

NEW YORK (AFP) - The Kansas City Royals picked up a 2013 Major League Baseball contract option for manager Ned Yost on Tuesday while the Tampa Bay Rays reportedly have signed a three-year extension with manager Joe Maddon.

Yost has gone 126-163 since replacing the fired Trey Hillman in May of 2010. Two months later, Yost signed an extension through 2012 with the option year for the club, which went on an 11-3 run last September with talented youngsters.

"It was real exciting seeing them all get to the big leagues last year and then watching them play together and watching the way they finished up was real impressive to me," Yost said.

Royals general manager Dayton Moore made the move to avoid having the question of Yost's future linger over the club all season, saying, "he does an incredible job of motivating players and an incredible job of leading."

Yost has an overall major

league managerial record of 583-665 after spending six prior seasons as manager of the Milwaukee Brewers. His extension comes just ahead of the start of pre-season training camp in Arizona.

Maddon's new deal was reported by the Tampa Bay Times, ESPN and Major League Baseball's website but was not expected to be made official by the Rays until Wednesday, when a news conference is scheduled.

Maddon, the fourth-longest tenured manager in the major leagues, spent 31 seasons with the Los Angeles Angels organization but took over Tampa Bay prior to the 2006 season and reversed the club's fortunes.

After averaging more than 90 losses over four seasons before his arrival in 2006, Maddon has the Rays averaging more than 90 triumphs a season over the past four years and guided them into the playoffs in 2008 and last year, when they moved past Boston on the final day of the season to qualify.

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Olympics: Italian PM Monti rules out Rome 2020 Olympic bid

ROME (AFP) - Italian Prime Minister Mario Monti on Tuesday withdrew Rome as a candidate to host the 2020 Olympic Games, describing a planned bid as "irresponsible".

Just a day before the deadline for submitting host city bids to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Italian leader decided the current economic crisis would make such a financial commitment untenable.

"After a difficult evaluation we've arrived at the unanimous conclusion that the government believes it would not be responsible in the cur-

rent conditions in Italy to take on these guarantees," said Monti in a press conference.

"We don't feel capable of taking on a financial commitment that could burden the Italian finances over the coming years.

The contenders for the 2020 Games are now Madrid, Baku, Doha, Istanbul and Tokyo.

Whilst Spain too is embroiled in a severe financial crisis, Alejandro Blanco, the head of their National Olympic Committee, told AFP they would not be following in Rome's wake.

"The withdrawal of Rome changes nothing for our candidacy," said Blanco by phone.

Madrid - who came second to Rio de Janeiro for the right to host the 2016 Games - at least has 80percent of the required infrastructure already built or nearly finished after their two losing bids for the 2012 and 2016 editions.

Rome would have needed a letter of commitment from the government in order to submit its bid officially with the IOC.

The government took the decision even though only nine of the 42 sites required to host the Games would have needed to be built from scratch, the others solely needing to be renovated.

Mario Pescante, the president of the Promotion Committee for Rome 2020, admitted this was a bitter pill to swallow.

"We've lost a great opportunity but we can only accept the government's decision, there's a lot of bitterness," he said.

"The government's decision was well thought out and was due exclusively to eco-

nomie motives.

"Our project for Rome 2020 was very serious but the government was immovable on the accounts.

"It's a shame because it was a unique opportunity not least to say to the young that we have big ambitions."

Pescante also suggested that any future bid for Rome, which last hosted the Games in 1960, may now be off the cards for some time.

"For a possible bid in 2024 we'd have to take into account Africa and if the 2020 Games are not assigned to Europe, Paris will enter the running for 2024 and their centenary," said Pescante.

"That means that there will be no more talk of the Olympic Games in Italy for another 10 years."

Italian Minister for Tourism and Sport Piero Gnudi, who last month had not given organisers much encouragement, praised the government's decision.

"It was a very tough decision but we shared the problems there are and we've approved our president's decision," said Gnudi.

"That doesn't mean that this government doesn't want to promote the values of sport.

"We want to increase and promote the practice of sport in schools."

Italian athletics legend and 200m Olympic champion in Moscow in 1980 Pietro Mennea agreed with the decision as well.

"There are more important things than Olympic values," he said.

"And I say this even though I am someone who competed in five Olympic Games and who is a believer in Olympic values."

Basketball-loving Chinese VP may see Lakers

WASHINGTON (AFP) - China's leader-in-waiting Xi Jinping, a professed fan of basketball, is preparing to see the Los Angeles Lakers in action when he visits California on a closely watched tour.

President Barack Obama, himself also known for his love of basketball, bonded with China's vice president about hoops as he received him in the Oval Office on Tuesday.

"I understand you're also going to be going to Los Angeles and maybe even taking in a Lakers game. So I hope you enjoy that very much," Obama said.

Xi's long-rumored appearance at the game would likely be alongside Vice President Joe Biden, whose office has announced that he will join the Chinese vice president in Los Angeles.

In a recent written interview with The Washington Post, Xi said that NBA games "are exciting to watch and have global appeal." "They are very popular in China. I do watch NBA games on television when I have time," he said.

Xi will be in Los Angeles on Friday, when the Lakers take on the Phoenix Suns at the Staples Center.

The Wall Street Journal earlier reported that Xi had personally told Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner that he wanted to see the Los An-



geles Clippers, but that his schedule only allowed him to see the Lakers.

Basketball is one of the most popular sports in China, with wide viewership for NBA games involving stars of Chinese origin including New York Knicks guard Jeremy Lin, who has caused a sensation since his start.

Chinese fans began tuning in to NBA games in large numbers a decade ago when Yao Ming, a seven-foot six (2.29 meter) phenomenon, joined the Houston Rockets and went on to become the most successful Chinese player in league history.

Xi, who is expected to take over next year as president, is hoping to use public appearances to win goodwill in the United States and perhaps soften his image for television viewers in China, according to experts.

Xi will also visit the Midwestern state of Iowa to reunite with people he met on a first visit to the United States in 1985 when he was a low-ranking official.

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